

Each year, more than 2 million poisonings are reported to poison control centers throughout the United States. More than 90 percent of these poisonings occur in the home, and over 50 percent of poisoning victims are children under the age of 6. For every dollar spent on poison control center services, seven dollars in medical costs are saved.

In spite of their obvious value, poison control centers are in jeopardy. Historically, these centers were typically funded by the private and public sector hospitals where they were located. The transition to managed care, however, has resulted in a gradual erosion of this funding. As this funding source has been drying up, poison control centers have only partially been able to replace this support by cobbling together state, local, and private funding sources. The financial squeeze has forced many centers to curtail their poison prevention advisory services and their information and emergency activities, and to reduce the number of nurses, pharmacists, and physicians answering the emergency telephones. Currently, there are 73 centers. In 1978, there were 661.

The "Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act" will provide up to \$28 million per year over the next five years to provide a stable source of funding for these centers, establish a national toll-free poison control hotline, and improve public education on poisoning prevention and poison center services. The legislation is designed to ensure that these funds supplement—not supplant—other funding that the centers may be receiving and provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services with the authority to impose a matching requirement. Further, to receive federal funding, a center will have to be certified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services or an organization expert in the field of poison control designated by the Secretary.

I encourage my colleagues to support this very cost-effective investment in the safety and health of the American public, especially our children. If you would like further information or would like to cosponsor this legislation, please let me know or call Jane Williams of my staff at 5-3761.

**HONORING ST. JOSEPH'S  
CATHOLIC ORPHAN SOCIETY**

**HON. ANNE M. NORTHUP**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 23, 1999*

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of Louisville, Kentucky's most valuable institutions. For 150 years, the St. Joseph's Catholic Orphan Society has reached out to our most vulnerable children and provided them with food, shelter, education, and most of all love. The problem of neglected children in our society is not new. In the 1840's a plague of cholera and malaria struck Louisville, ending the lives of hundreds

of people leaving many children without parents. This epidemic led to the founding of St. Joseph's Catholic Orphan Society as a home and refuge to these children.

Throughout the past 150 years, St. Joe's has provided a variety of services to boys and girls of all faiths and races. Today, St. Joe's continues to understand the unique needs of today's children. The organization works hard to keep groups of siblings together as the search for a new and loving family moves forward. St. Joe's also provides 40 beds for children who are abused or neglected and recently started the Home Base program to provide care to help stop child abuse and neglect. A child development center which provides weekday care for 150 children, 20 percent of whom have disabilities such as autism or Down's Syndrome, was founded in 1982.

Since 1849, St. Joseph's has been a Louisville institution performing a job that is desperately needed by our society. Love and caring are critical to any child's well being and St. Joe's dedicated volunteers and caregivers not only provide for the physical needs of children, but they share their love and dedication. I am proud to honor St. Joseph's Catholic Orphan Society on its 150th anniversary.

**DECLARATION OF POLICY OF THE  
UNITED STATES CONCERNING  
NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE  
DEPLOYMENT**

SPEECH OF

**HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 18, 1999*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4. This legislation would state unequivocally our position as a nation is to develop and deploy a missile defense system. In fact, the Pentagon has for years already been working on such a defense barrier. I oppose this legislation precisely because its passage will impede progress on proliferation and nuclear arms control, all for the sake of a feel-good but impractical change in our national defense policy.

In January, the Clinton administration announced it would increase to \$10 billion the funds necessary to develop a national missile defense, through the budget year 2005. I share the concern of administration officials who report that "rogue nations" like Iraq, North Korea or Libya may have technology which would allow them to deliver fatal warheads atop long-range missiles. However, that is exactly what the Pentagon's increase would address—how to prevent these missiles from landing on American soil. Their research program, similar in philosophy to the Patriot Missile we saw used during the Gulf War, is one I support.

However, if the Congress passes this legislation, its policy effects will be far-reaching.

Progress in nuclear non-proliferation and arms reduction with Russia will be jeopardized, as their leaders have stated this policy change will abrogate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. It makes no sense to me to send a dangerous signal to both our allies and treaty partners when in fact we are already underway in exploring the feasibility of a national missile defense system. The administration next spring will rule on whether the deployment of such a system is in our national interest, and therefore this legislation is premature in that regard as well. I intend to vote "no" on H.R. 4.

**TRIBUTE TO MADONNA HIGH  
SCHOOL**

**HON. ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 23, 1999*

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the achievements of a very special school located on the Northwest Side of Chicago: Madonna High School. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Madonna High School as it celebrates on March 25 fifty outstanding years in the education of young women.

Since 1949, Madonna High School has been working diligently to shape the minds of young women and create the leaders of tomorrow. Founded by the Franciscan Sisters at the St. Vincent Orphanage of Chicago, the school began with just three students and consisted of only four rooms. Today, after five decades of outstanding dedication and service to the communities of the City's Northwest Side, Madonna High School has become a nationally recognized institution with an enrollment over 300 students.

In fact, Madonna High School's commitment to excellence in education has won the recognition of numerous institutions. In 1987, they received a "For Character Award" from the University of Illinois-Chicago for building and reinforcing self-esteem in young women. In 1991, the school was honored by the U.S. Department of Education as "Recognized School of Excellence." Three years later, the Horatio Alger Association for Distinguished Americans recognized Madonna High School by awarding a scholarship to one of its outstanding students.

Mr. Speaker, Madonna High School has enriched the minds of its students, challenged their imaginations, and given generations of young women the skills and confidence they need to succeed. There is a record of which we all can be proud. I ask my colleagues to join me today in wishing Madonna High School a wonderful 50th Anniversary and in extending our best wishes as it begins a new era of excellence in education for the young women of Chicago.